

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

BEMCO, Inc.

Arkansas Manufacturing Solutions

BEMCO Achieves AS 9100 Certification with Assistance from Arkansas Manufacturing Solutions

Client Profile:

BEMCO started business in 1957 as a manufacturer of aircraft fuel and air ducting and has developed into a sub-contractor to the aerospace industry with customers such as the prime aircraft and helicopter companies, international sub-contractors, as well as the government armed services. Currently, BEMCO, Inc. employs 35 people at its facility in Centerton, Arkansas.

Situation:

In 2005, BEMCO, Inc. learned that certain customers were implementing the requirement of AS 9100 registration for their suppliers. While BEMCO, Inc. understood that the aerospace quality standard would impact the production environment and methods of operations by increasing efficiency and effectiveness, they did not have the internal expertise to effectively develop the required program. BEMCO, Inc. contacted the Arkansas Manufacturing Solutions (AMS), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for help.

Solution:

AMS worked with BEMCO Quality Assurance Manager, Jerry Yount, to determine specific needs and timeline expectations. The plan included: 1) setting up an implementation plan that fit BEMCO's timeline for registration; and 2) applying for a state grant to assist with the cost of hiring technical expert Steve Saunders of Saunders Consulting Services. This implementation project met the criteria for The Arkansas Science and Technology Authority Technical Transfer grant, and BEMCO's first grant application was approved in the spring of 2006. A second application was submitted and approved to provide additional assistance to complete the implementation in early 2007. The grants paid 75 percent of the cost of the consultant.

Results:

- * Achieved AS 9100 certification.
- * Retained sales of \$1.5 million.
- * Retained 15 jobs.
- * Anticipated increased sales.

Testimonial:

"We had a very positive experience with the assistance received from Arkansas Manufacturing Solutions and the expert technical assistance received from Steve Saunders of Saunders Consulting Service. The certification process is quite complex, and we could not have achieved certification on the first attempt without the help of Steve Saunders. The assistance of Arkansas Manufacturing Solutions and the Arkansas Science and Technology Authority made the ISO certification process

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much simpler for our small business. Certification would have been much more difficult for us to achieve without their help."

Jerry Yount, Senior Product Engineer/QC Manager